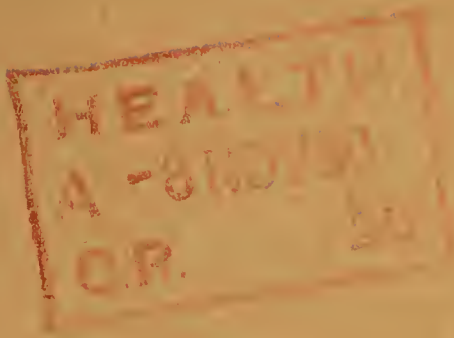




TAUNTON RURAL DISTRICT.

Annual Report
OF THE
Medical Officer of Health
FOR THE YEAR 1949

BY
HUGH MORRISON, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

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TAUNTON RURAL DISTRICT.

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF, 1949.

*Medical Officer of Health and Medical Superintendent of the
Taunton Isolation Hospital and Taunton
Tuberculosis Sanatorium, Taunton.*

HUGH MORRISON, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.
(appt. August, 1946).

Sanitary Inspector:

R. H. GARDNER, C.R.S.I. (appt. March, 1911)

Additional Sanitary Inspector:

E. G. PAYNE, C.R.S.I. (appt. Feb., 1936)

Matron, Isolation Hospital and Tuberculosis Sanatorium:

Miss M. E. MOSSMAN, S.R.N. (appt. March, 1943)

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To:

THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE
TAUNTON RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report for 1949. The Report is set out in the manner of previous ones, so that comparison with former years can easily be made.

The following are a few general comments on points of interest or importance, some of which are dealt with in more detail in the body of the report:—

- (1) The National Health Service Act which came into force on 5th July, 1948, appeared to be operating smoothly in this district. Medical Practitioners have fallen in well with the new administrative arrangements; hospital beds were still far short of requirements; the centralised control of ambulance services has been very satisfactory.
- (2) The Infant Mortality Rate of 23.01 compared well with that for England and Wales as a whole which stood at 32.00.
- (3) Measles occurred in epidemic proportions during the year, but there were few cases of other infections. Poliomyelitis showed a high prevalence in the South West of England during the autumn of 1949, and three cases of this disease were admitted to hospital from the Taunton Rural District.
- (4) An interesting summary is given of a Housing Survey carried out by the Sanitary Inspecting Staff. The results provide useful data in assessing the housing needs in various parts of the district.

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- (5) The number of applications to station caravans and other movable dwellings in the district and to use these as homes increased greatly, and it is now an important function of the Public Health Department to exercise supervision over the sanitary condition of these dwellings.
- (6) Water Supplies and particularly sewage disposal continued to be a source of anxiety, and were in some parts of the district far below the minimum standard desirable in a modern state. Economic conditions in the country as a whole have prevented the Council from carrying out many improvements which they recognise as desirable. However, some progress was made towards betterment in this field, and this has been referred to in the report.

I wish to thank the Clerk of the Council, the Staff of the Public Health Department, and the Matron and Staff of the Isolation Hospital for their willing assistance and co-operation.

I am,

Your Obedient Servant,

HUGH MORRISON,

Medical Officer of Health.

TAUNTON RURAL DISTRICT.

Statistics for the Year 1949.

Area (in acres)	70,675
Estimate of resident population, mid-year 1949 ...	19,330
Census population, 1931	17,101
No. of inhabited houses according to the Rate Books, on 31st December, 1949	5,179
Rateable value 31st December, 1949	£103,715
Sum represented by a 1d. Rate, 31st December, 1949	£425

Physical Features and Social Conditions.

Taunton Rural District surrounds the Borough of Taunton and is roughly triangular in shape, with Taunton Borough situated near the middle of the triangle. The boundary of the district is formed on the north by the Rural Districts of Williton and Bridgwater, on the east and south-east by the Rural Districts of Langport and Chard, on the south by the County of Devon, and on the south-west and west by the Rural District of Wellington. Those parts of the district which lie to the north-west and to the south are very hilly, while towards the north-east the ground is flat and liable to flooding. The north-west portion extends to the Quantock and Brendon Hills, and the south portion to the Blackdown Hills.

The district in the north is chiefly on the old and new red sandstone, and in the south on the lower lias and upper greensand. The part lying in the valley is on new red marl, new red sandstone and alluvium.

The country consists for the most part of rich arable and pasture land, and through the district run the main line of the Western Region of British Railways and four of its branches.

The inhabitants are chiefly engaged in agriculture, with withy-growing and basket-making in the north-east. There is a paper mill at the village of Creech St. Michael. A number of women work in the collar factories in Taunton.

Extracts from the Vital Statistics of the Year.

Live Births:—

		Total	M.	F.	} Birth Rate per 1,000 of the esti- mated resident population ... 15.67
Legitimate	...	281	139	142	
Illegitimate	...	22	14	8	
		303	153	150	

Still Births—Total 9.

Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births ...	28.85
Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population ...	0.47

Deaths—Total 230

Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population ...	11.89
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Deaths from Puerperal Causes—Nil.

	Deaths.	Rates per 1,000 births.
From Puerperal Sepsis ...	—	—
From other Maternal Causes ...	—	—

Deaths of Infants under 1 year of age—Total 7.

Legitimate ...	6
Illegitimate ...	1
Rate for all infants per 1,000 live births ...	23.01
„ legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births	21.35
„ illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births	45.45

Deaths from Cancer (all ages) ...	41
„ Measles (all ages) ...	—
„ Whooping Cough (all ages) ...	—
„ Diarrhoea (under two years of age) ...	—

Rates for England and Wales as a whole:—

Live births per 1,000 civilian population ...	16.7
Still births „ „ „ ...	0.39
Deaths, all causes „ „ „ ...	11.7
Maternal Mortality, all causes, per 1,000 total (live and still) births ...	0.98
Infant Mortality, all causes, per 1,000 total (live and still) births ...	32.00

Causes of Death during 1949.

Cause of Death.					M.	F.	Total
Typhoid and Paratyphoid Fevers	...	...	...	...	—	—	—
Cerebro-spinal Fever	...	...	...	...	—	—	—
Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	...	—	—	—
Whooping Cough	...	...	...	...	—	—	—
Diphtheria	...	...	...	...	—	—	—
Tuberculosis of the respiratory system	...	...	...	...	3	2	5
Other forms of Tuberculosis	...	...	...	...	1	—	1
Syphilitic diseases	...	...	...	...	—	1	1
Influenza	...	...	...	...	1	—	1
Measles	...	...	...	...	—	—	—
Acute Poliomyelitis and Polioencephalitis	...	...	...	...	—	—	—
Acute infectious Encephalitis	...	...	...	...	—	—	—
Cancer of buccal cavity, œsophagus, uterus	...	...	...	...	1	1	2
Cancer of stomach and duodenum	...	...	...	...	4	3	7
Cancer of breast	...	...	...	...	—	2	2
Cancer of all other sites	...	...	...	...	18	12	30
Diabetes	...	...	...	...	—	4	4
Intra-cranial vascular lesions	...	...	...	...	15	15	30
Heart disease	...	...	...	...	33	33	66
Other disease of the circulatory system	...	...	...	...	3	7	10
Bronchitis	...	...	...	...	7	2	9
Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	5	4	9
Other respiratory disease	...	...	...	...	1	3	4
Ulcer of stomach or duodenum	...	...	...	...	2	1	3
Diarrhœa, under 2 years	...	...	...	...	—	—	—
Appendicitis	...	...	...	...	—	1	1
Other digestive disease	...	...	...	...	—	2	2
Nephritis	...	...	...	...	1	2	3
Puerperal and post-abortion sepsis	...	...	...	...	—	—	—
Other maternal causes	...	...	...	...	—	1	1
Premature birth	...	...	...	...	2	1	3
Congenital malformation, birth injuries, etc.	...	...	...	...	3	—	3
Suicide	...	...	...	...	1	1	2
Road traffic accidents	...	...	...	...	4	2	6
Other violent causes	...	...	...	...	3	4	7
All other causes	...	...	...	...	10	8	18
All Causes—Total					118	112	230

Infant Mortality during 1949.

Cause of Death.	Under 1 week.	1 to 2 weeks.	3 to 4 weeks.	Total under 1 year
Prematurity ...	2	1	—	3
Cerebral Hæmorrhage	2	—	—	2
Intestinal obstruction ...	1	—	—	1
Suffocation ...	—	—	1	1
Totals	5	1	1	7

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.

Hospitals.

Infectious Diseases. Cases of infectious disease from Taunton Rural District are sent to the Taunton Isolation Hospital, situated in the Borough of Taunton. This hospital was administered up to 4th July, 1948, by a Joint Hospital Board, representing the various Districts from which cases were admitted. Since that date administration has passed to the Regional Hospital Board, with day to day management carried out by the Taunton Hospital Management Committee. Home isolation is carried out wherever the home conditions are satisfactory. Most cases of Ophthalmia Neonatorum are admitted to the Isolation Hospital and also cases of Puerperal Pyrexia.

Tuberculosis. Cases of pulmonary and non-pulmonary Tuberculosis come under the County scheme for treatment. The Sanatoria are at Quantock, Wincanton and Taunton for pulmonary cases. Cases requiring Orthopædic treatment are admitted to the Chard Sanatorium and to Bath Orthopædic Hospital. Pre-tubercular children and children with tubercular glands are sent to Compton Bishop Children's Home, near Axbridge.

Poliomyelitis. Suspected cases are sent for diagnosis to the Taunton Isolation Hospital. If the condition is confirmed they are seen by Regional Specialists who arrange for continuation treatment either as out-patients or as in-patients at an Orthopaedic Hospital at Bath.

Small-Pox. Provision for the accommodation of cases of Small-pox is made at a Hospital at Cossington, near Bridgwater.

General Medical and Surgical. The District is served by the Taunton and Somerset Hospital and the various Hospitals in Bristol, at all of which there are in-patient and out-patient facilities.

Chronic Sick. These are received into Hospitals, chiefly those in Taunton and Wellington, which have now passed from Public Assistance administration to that of the Regional Hospital Board.

Mental Sick. Cases are admitted to the Mental Hospital at Tone Vale, near Taunton.

Clinics and Treatment Centres.

Tuberculosis. Clinics for this disease are held in the Borough of Taunton, as part of the County Tuberculosis Scheme, and are attended by a County Tuberculosis Officer. In conjunction with the Clinics there is an After-Care Committee working in co-operation with the Tuberculosis Officer.

Venereal Disease. A combined Clinic and Treatment Centre is carried on at the Taunton and Somerset Hospital which caters for male and female patients of this and surrounding districts. This centre has now come under the administration of the Regional Hospital Board.

Maternity and Child Welfare. The Maternity and Child Welfare Acts are administered by the County Council, under whose supervision are also the Health Visitors and Midwives practising within the area. There is an excellent Maternity Home in the Urban District of Wellington at which some of the mothers from Taunton Rural District are confined. Obstetric Consultants in Taunton are available for consultation with Medical Practitioners in the District. Abnormal and complicated cases can be admitted for hospital treatment when necessary. Every case of Puerperal Pyrexia and Maternal Mortality is investigated by the Medical Staff of the County Council.

Laboratory Facilities. The Public Health Laboratory Service has a Laboratory in Taunton which undertakes the bacteriological examination of swabs, blood, faeces and sputum, etc. This service is available also to the Doctors practising in the District. Bacteriological and chemical analyses are also undertaken for the examination of milk, foods, water supplies and sewage effluents, etc. The co-operation and assistance of the Public Health Laboratory Staff in investigating all types of bacteriological and epidemiological problems is of the greatest value.

Ambulance Facilities. Ambulance transport for all cases has now become the responsibility of the Somerset County Council. A central ambulance department has been set up which arranges for vehicles to be provided as required.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water Supply.

The Rural Water Supplies and Sewerage Act, 1944, places at the disposal of the Minister of Health a sum of £15,000,000 to assist schemes executed after the war for the provision or improvement of water supply and of sewerage facilities in Rural Districts, regard being taken, amongst other things, to the needs of industry and agriculture. The Council have under consideration a post-war scheme for the extension of a piped water supply to parishes requiring it. The provision of such a supply is most urgently needed in the following cases:—Cheddon Fitzpaine, Churchstanton, Creech St. Michael (Adsborough), Durston (the village), Kingston (the village, Greenway, Parsonage Lane, Fulford and Dodhill), Otterford (Bishopswood), Stoke St. Mary (the village), Tolland (the village), West Hatch (the village and higher portion of the parish), West Monkton (the village, Cherry Grove and Gotton).

Some of the parishes mentioned are within the limits of supply of the Taunton Corporation Water Undertaking, and any supply required in them must be obtained by application to the Corporation. The following parishes are within the limits of supply of the Taunton Corporation:—Bishops Hull, Cheddon Fitzpaine, Corfe, Creech St. Michael, Kingston, Norton Fitzwarren, Orchard Portman, Pitminster, Ruishton, Staplegrove, Stoke St. Mary, Thornfalcon, Trull and West Monkton.

Three water undertakings are owned by the Taunton Rural District Council. One is at Westleigh in the parish of Lydeard St. Lawrence, and another in the parishes of West Bagborough and Cothelstone. The third water undertaking is that of the Crown Lands Estate, known as the Portman Supply. During the course of the year this supply was acquired by the Rural District Council. It is chlorinated before delivery to the consumers and quarterly bacteriological analyses of the 4 supplies showed the water to be satisfactory.

The piped water supply to other parts of the District has been on the whole, bacteriologically satisfactory, several examinations having been made during the course of the year. The supplies have also been satisfactory in quantity apart from fairly severe summer shortage in the Portman Supply. This shortage is likely to recur in future years and the problem in the parishes affected, namely, West Hatch, North Curry, Stoke St. Gregory and Thornfalcon is unlikely to be solved until the new scheme of supply for these areas has been put into operation. Some of the wells in the district yield satisfactory water but others are very liable to contamination. With these, chlorination or other methods sometimes result in a pure supply but many of the wells are shallow and can never be relied upon to give a constant wholesome supply. In these cases boiling of the water is usually advised and the problem will not be satisfactorily solved until piped water is taken to the properties concerned. In the parish of West Hatch there was again a serious shortage of well water during the summer; this is a recurring trouble and the projected water scheme for the Eastern parishes of the District will be most beneficial to this area.

Extensions and improvements of the piped supplies in the District during the course of the year included new pipe supplies from Taunton Corporation Waterworks to Bathpool, Council-house estates at Bishops Hull, Creech St. Michael and West Monkton. An additional line of main was laid to carry the Portman Supply from the gathering ground to Bickenhall Reservoir, and work was in progress on the construction of a water tower at Stoke St. Gregory to improve the pressure of water supplies in that area. Works were begun in Stapley to provide a piped supply for houses in this district.

Taunton Borough have had surveys carried out for the building of a large impounding reservoir at Clatworthy in the region of the headwaters of the river Tone. If this scheme is brought into operation there will probably be a large surplus of water over and above the needs of the Borough and this should make available an abundant supply for the Taunton Rural District, but it will, of course, be a considerable time before these plans materialise.

The following return presents in tabular form the position as to the distribution of piped water supplies in the District:—

PARISH.	Area of Parish. Acres.	No. of houses in Parish.	No. of houses having a piped water supply under pressure into or on to the house (including those with a tap outside only).	Of the houses not included in 3 (1), the number having within 100 yards of a water main available for a supply.	Of the houses not in 3 (1) & (2) the number that are in villages, hamlets or groups of 20 or more houses so placed as to lie within a circle $\frac{1}{4}$ mile in diameter.	Of the houses not connected to a public sewer the number in villages, hamlets or groups of 20 or more houses so placed as to lie within a circle $\frac{1}{4}$ mile in diameter.
	1	2	3 (1)	3 (2)	3 (3)	4
Ash Priors ...	641	36	19	11	—	—
Bickenhall ...	1143	45	36	—	—	—
Bishops Hull ...	1283	447	436*	25	—	—
Bishops Lydeard ...	4832	539	318	42	—	20
Cheddon Fitzpaine ...	1883	132	32	19	—	23
Churchstanton ...	5435	155	—	—	38	38
Combe Florey ...	1382	69	55	4	—	—
Corfe ...	1165	77	76	—	—	22
Cotthelstone ...	1455	40	16	—	—	—
Creech St. Michael ...	2298	303	299	97	—	172
Curland ...	648	39	20	—	—	—
Durston ...	1013	51	—	—	—	—
Halse ...	1320	83	43	15	—	43
Hatch Beauchamp ...	1408	120	105	5	—	58
Kingston ...	2584	231	29	—	79	123
Lydeard St. Lawrence ...	2748	118	78	2	—	39
North Curry ...	5822	385	327	30	—	—
Norton Fitzwarren ...	2054	226	190	71	—	—
Orchard Portman ...	1665	50	18	—	—	—
Otterford ...	2446	107	—	—	34	—
Pitminster ...	5780	375	240	88	—	34 (Pitminster)
Ruishton ...	1027	143	117	31	—	33 (Blagdon)
Staple Fitzpaine ...	3029	58	42	—	—	64 (Staplehay)
Staplegrove ...	1027	87	51	42	—	49
Stoke St. Gregory ...	4135	350	345	3	—	114
Stoke St. Mary ...	2019	150	58	9	—	37
Thornfalcon ...	822	46	41	—	—	25
Tolland ...	842	24	2	—	—	—
Trull ...	2172	240	180	36	—	—
West Bagborough ...	2006	113	100	—	—	140
West Hatch ...	1619	87	9	—	—	57
West Monkton ...	2972	384	235	101	20	—
						110 (Bathpool)
						101 (M. Heath.)
						39 (Village)

Sewerage and Sewage Disposal.

Under the Rural Water Supplies and Sewerage Act, 1944, the Council had, at the end of the year, under consideration with the expert assistance of their Engineers a post-war scheme for the sewerage of those parts of the District which were not sewered. Proper sewage disposal is not only an amenity but it is a necessity and is inevitable whenever a piped water supply has been provided. Pail closets and privy middens are most undesirable because they are more often than not badly attended to owing to the unpleasant work connected with them. A multiplication of privately owned cesspools and septic tanks is also undesirable and these have been increasing in number because of the addition of water closets and baths to houses having a piped water supply.

During the course of the year a number of cases of alleged nuisance arising from the effluents of septic tanks were investigated. Some of the complaints were fully justified and various measures were taken in an attempt to improve matters.

Only 7 parishes out of 32 in the District have sewage disposal works of their own, these being the parishes of:—

Bishops Hull—though some 30 houses or so are not connected with the main sewer. *Bishops Lydeard*.—Some of the Council Houses in this parish are not connected with the sewer. *Combe Florey*.—The disposal works here serves its purpose for the time being but is not large enough to deal with sewage from any more houses. *Corfe*.—New disposal works have recently been constructed in this parish because of a very objectionable nuisance which existed there. The piping involved in carrying out this work will be made use of when the major scheme for the Rural District as a whole is brought into operation. *Hatch Beauchamp*—These works are very old and entirely unsatisfactory. A considerable portion of this village is not sewered at all. *North Curry*.—The works are in the nature of a sewage farm. They are overloaded and the land is suffering from "Sewage sickness." *Norton Fitzwarren*.—Recent disposal works have been constructed here and should prove ample and satisfactory for a further increase in population.

On the whole, therefore, it may be said that the amount of sewerage in the District is negligible. The creation of new dis-

posals according to the schemes submitted by the Council's Engineers will be an extremely expensive matter and the Council have decided that parishes should be classified for this purpose in the following order of priority as a guide to the stages by which the work may later on be carried out.

1st Priority.

Bishops Hull.—Shutewater Hill.
Hatch Beauchamp Parish.
Staplegrove Parish.—Village only.
Pitminster Parish.
Trull Parish, including Comeytrowe but omitting Dipford area.
West Monkton Parish.
Norton Fitzwarren —Station Road and Southern part of parish.
Ruishton.—Village only.
Creech St. Michael.—Village as far as Police Station, excluding higher part of parish and Ham.

2nd Priority.

Lydeard St. Lawrence.—Village.
West Bagborough.—Village.
Combe Florey.—Village.
(The possibility of these three parishes being drained to the existing works at Bishops Lydeard to be considered.)
Halse Parish.
Ash Priors Parish.
Kingston Parish and the North and West part of Staplegrove including Langford.
Cheddon Fitzpaine Parish, including Lyngford.
Stoke St. Gregory.—Portion South of railway.
North Curry.—Oxen Lane and Greenway and extension North-east of parish.
Stoke St. Mary Parish.
Ruishton.—Henlade and Lower Henlade.
Shoreditch.

3rd Priority.

Creech St. Michael.—Ham and Northern part of parish including Adsborough.
Durstun Parish.

Stoke St. Gregory.—Portion North of railway.
 North Curry.—Knapp, Lillesden, Wrantage and Newport.
 Thornfalcon Parish.
 Staple Fitzpaine Parish.
 Curland Parish.
 Churchstanton Parish (Stapley and Churchinford).
 Otterford Parish (Bishopswood).
 Bishops Hull.—Rumwell, Titherleigh, Roughmoor, Barr
 and Upcott.
 Pitminster.—Howleigh and Angersleigh.
 Trull.—Dipford area.

The drainage from the areas adjoining the Borough of Taunton mentioned in the 1st Priority List could be received into the Borough's sewers if permission for this were obtained. The sewage disposal works constructed at Sandhill Park during the war has been taken over by the Council and has proved of great value in the parish of Bishops Lydeard. The Council have also acquired works of military construction at Silk Mill Crossing in the parish of Norton Fitzwarren and these works are being brought into use to help with the sewage of that parish.

Refuse Collection. The collection and disposal of unburnable household refuse now operates in all the parishes of the District. The average amount of collection per month is about 55 three-ton lorry loads. The loads are tipped into clay pits in the parish of Creech St. Michael and controlled. The tips are constantly sprayed with proprietary insecticides to meet the fly menace and the rats are successfully kept under by the application of poisoned bait containing zinc phosphide and arsenic after pre-baiting with damp sausage rusks.

Salvage. This war-time measure continued to be carried out by the Public Health Staff and was successful. Compulsory collections were discontinued in July by order of the Ministry of Supply. Salvage of the following materials was made during the year:—

Paper	...	...	...	...	31	tons
Iron	...	...	...	...	11 $\frac{1}{2}$	„
Non-ferrous metals	...	...	...	...	$\frac{1}{4}$	„
Bones	...	...	...	...	18	„
Rags	...	...	...	...	3	„
Bottles	...	...	...	...	$\frac{1}{2}$	„

Cash value of above :—£282.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

The following tabular statement is furnished by the Sanitary Inspectors:—

Number and nature of inspections during the year:—

Dwelling houses	...	...	...	...	595
No. of Dwelling houses repaired	...	...	...	...	17
„ „ with repairs in hand	...	...	...	...	—
Voluntarily closed	...	...	...	...	—
Slaughter houses	...	...	...	...	267
Bakehouses	...	...	...	...	37
Other premises where food is prepared or sold	...	...	...	...	52
Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops	...	...	...	...	329
Places where animals are kept (other than Cowsheds)	...	...	...	...	14
Infectious Disease enquiries and disinfections, etc.	...	...	...	...	27
Factories, Workshops and Workplaces	...	...	...	...	142
Miscellaneous	...	...	...	...	96

Number of Notices served during the year:—

Informal Notices	...	...	...	...	42
Statutory Notices	...	...	...	...	—

Result of service of Notices:—

Total Notices complied with	...	...	...	...	42
Notices standing over at the end of 1949	...	...	...	...	—

In addition, 34 samples of water were taken for examination by the County Bacteriologist. 10 of these (from wells) were unsatisfactory, 4 wells were closed and main water laid on, and 6 others after repair, pumping out and heavy chlorination eventually produced potable waters.

Shops and Offices. Under the provisions of Sec. 13 (3) of the Shops Act, 1934, relating to ventilation, temperature and sanitary conveniences, 27 visits were made.

Camping Sites. The Local Authority have issued 13 licences in respect of these in accordance with Section 269 (2) of the Public Health Act, 1936.

There are one or two sites in the district licensed to accommodate a small number of movable dwellings, the maximum number on one site being six. Other caravans are placed singly on sites in various parts of the district. As a result of the housing shortage there has been a great increase in the number of people wishing to make use of these movable dwellings as temporary homes. The position requires close supervision from the Public Health point of view and in this District very careful enquiry and inspection is made by the Medical Officer of Health and the Sanitary Inspector before a licence is granted.

Smoke Abatement. One complaint arose during the year in connection with a factory chimney. It was alleged that an excessive quantity of black smoke was being discharged almost continuously from the chimney stack. Investigations were made with the full and willing co-operation of the factory directors and the stoking arrangements were examined. It was found that there was in fact an excessive discharge of smoke caused by a new system of stoking which had recently been introduced. A great improvement was effected and it was not necessary to take action under Section 101 of the Public Health Act, 1936.

Swimming Baths and Pools. There are not any in the area.

Eradication of Bed Bugs. No cases occurred during the year.

Schools. The sanitary condition and water supplies of the schools in the area are fairly satisfactory on the whole, but some school premises do not come up to modern standards in this respect. The schools and medical examination of the scholars are under the control of the Education Committee of the County Council.

Offensive Trades. There are 2 Offensive Trades in the district within the meaning of Section 107 of the Public Health Act, 1946. One is that of Tripe Boiling, and the other a Knacker's Yard for the provision of dog and cat food. The premises are well maintained and in a satisfactory condition.

Bakehouses. There are 13 Bakehouses in the District. 18 inspections were made to them. They are on the whole satisfactory. 11 of them now draw their water supply from public mains.

Milk Supply. There are 412 milk producing premises in the District. Owing to the large number, it was only possible to inspect each one once during the year. As a result of inspections the following works have been carried out:—

New cowsheds	...	...	...	...	5
New dairies	...	...	...	...	3
Yards concreted	...	...	...	...	4
Existing cowsheds remodelled	...	...	...	...	1
Existing dairies remodelled	...	...	...	...	0
Water from mains installed	...	...	...	...	5

After September 30th the duty of examining these premises passed to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries but the Sanitary Department is still consulted on all drainage problems.

Tuberculosis Order, 1925.—Under this Order 12 cows had to be slaughtered during the year.

Milk and Dairies Order, 1926.—The Registers which have to be kept under this Order show as follows:—

Number of Producers on the Register	...	...	...	562
Number of Distributors on the Register divided as follows:—				
(a) Distributors only	...	...	...	7
(b) Distributors who are also Producers	...	...	...	40

There are 2 Supplementary Licences issued by the Taunton Rural District for the sale of Pasteurised milk in their area but the actual pasteurising process is carried out elsewhere.

Ice Cream. The number of retailers of this product in the area is ten. Of these, two only manufacture the ice cream, and one of the two does so only during the summer months. These premises are under constant supervision and are very satisfactory. The remainder of the retailers sell pre-wrapped ice cream manufactured elsewhere.

Meat Supply. Under the Live Stock (Restrictions on Slaughtering) Order, 1940, slaughtering of animals for human consumption is carried out only at certain specified slaughter houses, and the meat after inspection is distributed over a very large area within and without the district. The inspection of meat under these conditions takes up a large portion of the time of the two Sanitary Inspectors. The following table shows the number of carcasses inspected and the number of parts thereof condemned as unfit for human consumption:—

	Cattle excluding Cows.	Cows.	Calves.	Sheep and Lambs.	Pigs.
Number killed (if known)	0	0	22,677	17	2
Number inspected ...	0	0	22,677	17	2
All diseases except Tuberculosis.					
Whole carcasses condemned	0	0	45	1	0
Carcasses of which some part or organ was con- demned	0	0	26	0	0
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than Tuberculosis	0	0	.31	5.9	0
Tuberculosis only.					
Whole carcasses condemned	0	0	2	0	0
Carcasses of which some part or organ was con- demned	0	0	0	0	0
Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis	0	0	0	0	0

The following were also condemned as being unfit for food:—

Sugar	...	3½ cwts.	Meat Pies	...	200
Beef	...	166 lbs.	Tinned Foods	...	258 tins
Mutton	...	37 lbs.	Flour	...	195 lbs,

Food Poisoning Outbreaks.—No outbreaks of Food Poisoning have occurred in the District in the year under review.

FACTORIES ACT, 1937.

The inspection of factories and workshops in the district from a public health point of view is carried out by the staff of the Public Health Department. Routine visits are paid to the various premises and the following table gives particulars of this work. It is to be noted that the term Factories as used in this connection now includes Workshops, which accounts for the large number on the Register in this Rural District.

1.—Inspections for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors):—

Premises.	Number on Register.	Number of		
		Inspec- tions.	Written notices.	Occupiers prose- cuted.
(i) Factories in which Sections 1 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be en- forced by Local Authorities	93	110	1	0
(ii) Factories not included in (i) to which Section 7 applies:				
(a) Subject to the Local Authorities (Transfer of Enforcement) Order, 1938	26	32	5	0
(b) Others	0	0	0	0
(iii) Other Premises under the Act (excluding out-workers' premises)	0	0	0	0
Total ...	119	142	6	0

2.—Cases in which defects were found:—

Particulars.	Number of cases in which defects were found.				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted.
	Found.	Remedied	Referred		
			To H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector	
Want of cleanliness (S.1)	1	1	0	0	0
Overcrowding (S.2) ...	0	0	0	0	0
Unreasonable temperature (S.3)	0	0	0	0	0
Inadequate ventilation (S.4)	0	0	0	0	0
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6)	0	0	0	0	0
Sanitary conveniences (S.7):—					
(a) Insufficient ...	0	0	0	0	0
(b) Unsuitable or defective	1	1	0	0	0
(c) Not separate for sexes	0	0	0	0	0
Other offences (not including offences relating to Homework) ...	0	0	0	0	0
Total ...	2	2	0	0	0

Outwork (Sections 110 and 111).

Nature of Work.	Section 110.			Section 111.		
	No. of outworkers in August list required by Sect. 110 (1) (c)	No. of cases of default in sending lists to the Council.	No. of prosecutions for failure to supply lists.	No. of instances of work in unwholesome premises.	Notices served.	Prosecutions.
Wearing apparel: Making, &c. ...	42	0	0	0	0	0
Cleaning and Washing ...	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total ...	42	0	0	0	0	0

HOUSING.

There have been no cases of legal overcrowding during the year.

Three houses condemned under the Housing Act, 1936, at Athelney, North Curry and West Monkton had their licences renewed. This re-occupation of condemned houses is not an infringement of Sec. 155 (3) of the Housing Act, 1936, as it is an emergency measure resulting from the past war and designed to meet the housing needs of the influx of agricultural workers and covered by Regulation 68a Defence (General) Regulations, 1939. These houses have been inspected by the Medical Officer of Health, who reported to the Council the minimum repairs, etc., necessary to bring them in a such a condition of cleanliness and repair as to be reasonably capable of being used as a temporary measure for housing purposes without detriment to health. Where the owner has complied with the recommendations, the Council may issue a licence authorising the occupation of a house, but the licence is not operative for more than six months at a time.

The Council have had under consideration the post-war housing needs of the District (a) to replace unfit dwellings; (b) to abate overcrowding; (c) for other reasons.

A survey has been made throughout the District, and 3,246 houses were inspected and classified.

The survey of houses in the district under £16 rateable value, but excluding Council Houses and houses erected after 1930 resulted as follows:—

(1) Houses satisfactory in all respects		458 or 14.1% of the total
(2) Houses with minor defects		2,072 or 63.8% do.
(3) Houses with major defects and or requiring structural alterations		366 or 11.3% do.
(4) Houses provisionally graded as unfit		350 or 10.8% do.

The houses in categories (2) and (3) as far as existing conditions permit will be improved so as they may be placed in a higher grade. Of the houses provisionally graded as unfit, 8 were purchased by private individuals, on becoming vacant, and the new owners reconstructed them under licence and made them satisfactory in all respects.

The survey also shows that—

14.6% of the houses are connected to the sewer.

25.5% of the houses have septic tanks for sewage disposal.

59.9% of the houses used pail closets or similar types as their sanitary accommodation.

62.4% of the houses were supplied from the main water supply

31.5% of the houses were supplied from wells.

6.1% of the houses were supplied from springs.

49% of the houses were provided with wash up sinks.

14.7% of the houses were provided with baths

9.5% of the houses used gas for lighting, some of these also using it for heating and/or cooking.

35.2% of the houses used electricity for lighting, some of these also using it for heating and/or cooking.

The Council's building programme was as follows:—

Parish.				Number completed during year 1949.	Number under construction at 31st Dec., 1949.
Bishops Hull	...	...	...	22	—
Combe Florey	...	...	...	4	—
Corfe	...	...	...	4	—
Creech St. Michael	...	...	...	10	—
Lydeard St. Lawrence	...	...	...	4	—
Stoke St. Gregory	...	...	...	4	—
Trull	...	...	...	4	—
West Bagborough	...	...	...	4	—
West Monkton	...	...	...	30	2
Hatch Beauchamp	...	...	...	—	8
North Curry	...	...	...	—	10
Norton Fitzwarren	...	...	...	—	10
				86	30

The following table shows the Parishes in which the Council have erected houses under the various Acts:—

Parish.	Address.	Number of Houses.
Bishops Hull ...	1/70 Smithy Cottages ...	70
do. ...	20/35 Mountway Cottages ...	16
		— 86
Bishops Lydeard ...	1/8 Gore Cottages ...	8
do. ...	1/10 Pound Lane ...	10
do. ...	1/12 Mill Lane Cottages ...	12
do. ...	1/30 Halfyard Cottages ...	30
		— 60
Cheddon Fitzpaine ...	1/8 School Cottages ...	8
Churchstanton ...	1/4 Stapley Cottages ...	4
do. ...	1/4 Church Road Cottages ...	4
		— 8
Combe Florey ...	1/4 Meadowside ...	4
Corfe ...	1/4 Brook Cottages ...	4
Creech St. Michael ...	1/8 Ryes Terrace ...	8
do. ..	1/6 Charlton Lane Cottages ...	6
do. ...	1/4 Cheads Cottages ...	4
do. ...	1/16 Rocketts Cottages ...	16
do. ...	1/10 Creechwood Terrace ...	10
		— 44
Curland ...	1/4 Castle View ..	4
Hatch Beauchamp ...	1/4 Palmers Green Cottages ...	4
Kingston ...	1/6 Parks Cottages ...	6
do. ...	1 and 2 Chaces ...	2
do. ...	1/8 Greenway Terrace ...	8
do. ...	1/4 Fulford Cottages ...	4
do. ...	1/10 Parsonage Cottages ...	10
		— 30
Lydeard St. Lawrence..	1/4 Nethercott Road ...	4
do. ...	1/8 Cross Croft ...	8
		— 12
North Curry ...	1/6 Oxen Lane	6
do. ...	1/4 Backham Cottages	4
do. ...	1/10 Croft Cottages ...	10
do. ...	1/8 Lillesdon Terrace ...	8
do. ...	1/8 Cricket Cottages ...	8
		— 36

Parish.	Address.	Number of Houses.
Norton Fitzwarren ...	1/4 Burnshill Terrace ...	4
do. ...	1/24 Rectory Road Cottages ...	24
do. ...	1/10 Station Road Cottages ...	10
do. ...	1/4 Manleys Cottages ...	4
do. ...	1/4 Court Cottages ...	4
		— 46
Pitminster ...	1/8 Littleham Cottages ...	8
Ruishton ...	1/5 Ruishton Lane Cottages ...	5
do. ...	1/3 Lipe Lane Cottages ...	3
do. ...	1/4 Slades Cottages ...	4
do. ...	1/12 Steart Cottages ...	12
		— 24
Staplegrove ...	1/6 Hillhead Cottages ...	6
Stoke St. Gregory ...	1/16 Willey Road ...	16
do. ...	1/8 Stathe Cottages ...	8
do. ...	1/20 Woodhill Terrace ...	20
		— 44
Stoke St. Mary ...	1/4 Homefield Cottages ...	4
Thornfalcon ...	1/8 Glebe Cottages ...	8
Trull ...	1 and 2 Horts Cottages ...	2
do. ...	7/14 Mill Lane ...	8
		— 10
West Bagborough ...	1/10 Vale View Cottages ...	10
do. ...	1/4 Hill View Cottages ...	4
do. ...	1/4 South View Cottages ...	4
do. ...	1/4 Parkside ...	4
		— 22
West Monkton ...	1/4 Titley Cottages ...	4
do. ...	1/4 Brittons Ash Cottages ...	4
do. ...	1/6 Hyde Lane Cottages ...	6
do. ...	1/14 School Road Cottages ...	14
do. ...	1/8 Elms Estate ...	8
do. ...	21/54 do. ...	34
		— 70
TOTAL ...		542

Of the above total of 542 houses, 204 were built to replace houses dealt with by Slum Clearance in previous years, under the Housing Acts of 1930 and 1936.

Ex-Military Camps.—In September, 1946, the Taunton Rural District Council took over the administration of Camps at Pyrland, Courtlands and Sandhill Park on behalf of the Ministry of Health. These camps had been occupied unofficially by a process of “squatting”. In 1947 a similar camp at Culmhead was taken over. The accommodation in the camps consists of Nissen or similar type of huts, some of which have been modified to make them more suitable for family occupation. They are far from ideal from the housing point of view, and their use can only be looked upon as a temporary expedient, but at least they provide some relief in the present desperate housing shortage. The number of occupiers in each of the four camps at the end of 1949 was as follows:—

Pyrland Hall	...	...	2
Courtlands	...	...	12
Sandhill Park	...	...	108
Culmhead	...	...	20

PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

The following table gives the number of notifications received for various notifiable diseases (other than Tuberculosis), their age groups and the notification rates compared with those of England and Wales, and the number admitted to the Isolation Hospital:—

Diseases.	No. of Notifications.	AGE GROUPS.								No. admitted to Isolation Hospital.
		0	1	3	5	10	15	25 & over	Not known	
Scarlet Fever ...	14	—	1	2	7	2	2	—	—	*16
Whooping Cough...	28	3	9	7	7	0	1	1	—	—
Acute Poliomyelitis	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	* 3
Measles ...	271	15	54	58	108	18	7	9	2	3
	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Acute Pneumonia..	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—
Erysipelas ...	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	5	—	3
Puerperal Pyrexia..	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
Oph. Neonatorum..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	322	18	64	67	122	20	10	18	3	25

*These numbers are greater than the number notified because, for some of the cases, official notification was not received although they were removed to Hospital.

Notification rates for Taunton Rural District compared with those of England and Wales taken as a whole are calculated per 1,000 civilian population, except Puerperal Pyrexia which is calculated per 1,000 total live and still births:—

Diseases.	No. of Notifications.	Rates for	
		Taunton R.D.	England and Wales.
Scarlet Fever ...	14	0.72	1.63
Whooping Cough ...	28	1.44	2.39
Measles ...	271	14.02	8.95
Acute Pneumonia ...	2	0.10	0.80
Erysipelas ...	5	0.26	0.19
Puerperal Pyrexia ...	1	0.51	6.31
Acute Poliomyelitis ..	1	0.51	0.13
Food Poisoning ...	1	0.51	0.14
Typhoid Fever ...	—	—	0.01
Paratyphoid ...	—	—	0.01
Dysentery ...	—	—	—
Diphtheria ...	—	—	0.04
Cerebrospinal Fever ...	—	—	0.02

TUBERCULOSIS.

The following table gives the number of new cases of respiratory and non-respiratory Tuberculosis notified during 1949 and mortality from the disease:—

New cases and Mortality during 1949.

Ages in Years.				New Cases.				Deaths.			
				Resp'tory.		Non-Resp.		Resp'tory.		Non-Resp.	
				M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0 — 1	...	..		—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1 — 5	...	...		1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
5 — 10	...	...		—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
10 — 15	...	...		—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
15 — 20	...	...		1	2	—	—	—	—	—	—
20 — 25	...	...		2	3	—	—	—	—	—	—
25 — 35	...	...		1	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
35 — 45	...	...		2	1	—	—	—	1	—	—
45 — 55	...	...		5	2	1	—	3	—	—	—
55 — 65	...	.		3	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
65 and up	...	...		2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Not known	...			1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	...	...		28		3		4		—	

At the end of the year, the Tuberculosis Register contained the names and addresses of 83 cases of pulmonary Tuberculosis and 19 cases of non-pulmonary Tuberculosis.

No action had to be taken under the Public Health (Prevention of Tuberculosis) Regulations, 1925, relating to persons suffering from pulmonary Tuberculosis employed in the milk trade, or under Section 172 of the Public Health Act, 1936, relating to the compulsory removal to Hospital of persons suffering from Tuberculosis.

Prevention of Blindness.

No arrangements have been made by the Local Authority with respect to the prevention of Blindness, under Sect. 176 of the Public Health Act, 1936. Cases of Ophthalmia Neonatorum are notified by the Doctors to the Public Health Department of the County Council and when necessary are admitted to the Taunton Isolation Hospital.

Diphtheria Prophylaxis.

Immunisation against Diphtheria continues to be carried out by the Medical Staff of the Somerset County Council and by the Medical Practitioners in the District. The County Council's Immunisation Scheme, which was begun in Taunton Rural District during 1941, continues to make progress, and the following figures supplied by the County Council show the condition of the child population as regards immunisation at the end of 1949:—

Pre-School Children: aged 0—4 years.

Number Immunised.	% Immunised of Total Children in this Age Group.
909	63.92

School Children: aged 5—14 years.

Number Immunised.	% Immunised of Total Children in this Age Group.
1,560	67.15

It is gratifying to note that no case of diphtheria was notified in the District during the course of the year.

In the recent Circulars (193/45 and 194/45), issued by the Ministry of Health, stress is rightly laid on ensuring primary

inoculation of as many pre-school and school children as possible. At the same time it must be remembered that if Diphtheria is to be kept under control, the state of resistance of children who have received primary immunisation must be maintained by re-inoculation at suitable intervals. Infants of the age of 8 to 9 months should be immunised because one of every two unimmunised contracting the disease under the age of one year, dies. By the time the child reaches school age, the primary stimulus of earlier immunisation has waned, and, to remedy this, every child should be given a reinforcing dose of antigen before he begins school attendance.

